

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 10, 16, 51-56 and 74-78, all readable on the elected species of Figs. 39 and 40, are pending in the application. Claims 1-9, 11-15, 17-50 and 57-73 have been cancelled.

Claims 16, 55-56 and 74-78 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. According to the Examiner, claims 16, 55-56 and 74-78 are not supported by the original drawings and disclosure of elected species of Figs. 39 and 40 allegedly because they contain subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventors at the time the application was filed had possession of the claimed invention. However, applicants disagree in that the paragraph beginning at line 1 on page 19 of the specification as originally filed states that the light extracting deformities 135 schematically shown in Figs. 39 and 40 may be of any desired shape along the length and width of the panel surface area 22. This includes the shape shown in Figs. 16-21 which includes a reflective or refractive light extracting surface 101 and associated end wall surface 104, both of which intersect the panel surface 22 and intersect each other to form a ridge 103 as shown in Figs. 18 and 19. Moreover, page 16 of the specification has been amended to provide clear support for this claim language.

Further, the paragraph beginning at line 1 of page 19 as originally filed also states that in Fig. 39 the light extracting deformities 135 are arranged in straight rows 136 along the length of the panel surface area with the deformities

in each of the rows oriented to face the light source so that all of the deformities are substantially in line with the light rays being emitted from the light source. Also page 19 states that the deformities 135 in Fig. 40 are oriented to face the light source 3 similar to Fig. 39, and that the rows 135 of deformities in Fig. 40 are in substantial radial alignment with the light source.

In addition, original claims 9 and 51 recite that at least one light source is optically coupled to only a portion of the width of the input edge of the panel member, and that one of the surfaces of at least some of the deformities at different locations across the width of the panel surface is a sloping surface that is angled at different angles depending on the location of the deformities across the width of the panel surface to face the portion of the input edge to which the light source is optically coupled. Also original claim 10 recites that at least some of the deformities are arranged in a radial pattern across the width and length of the panel surface with the sloping surface of the deformities in radial alignment with the portion of the input edge to which the light source is optically coupled. Further, original claims 15 and 55 recite a plurality of light sources optically coupled to different portions of the width of the input edge, and the sloping surface of different ones of the deformities at different locations across the width of the panel surface are angled at different angles to face different portions of the input edge to which the different light sources are optically coupled. Accordingly, withdrawal of the 112 rejection is respectfully requested.

Moreover, page 19 of the specification has been amended to provide clear antecedent basis for this claim language which is fully supported by the original drawings and original claims 9, 10, 15, 51 and 55.

Also new formal drawings are submitted herewith in which new drawing Figures 39A and B and 40A and B have been added to show the plurality of light sources claimed in claims 16 and 55-56 and the intersecting surfaces of the deformities claimed in claims 74-78 to comply with the Examiner's requirement that the drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Such new drawing figures are clearly supported by the original description on page 19 and original claims 9, 10, 15, 51 and 55 and thus in no way constitute new matter.

The same remarks also apply with respect to the Examiner's objection under 35 U.S.C. § 132(a) that the amendment filed January 30, 2006 added material which is not supported by the original disclosure, namely the species of Figs. 39-40 containing deformities with intersecting surfaces. This is clearly not the case for the reasons previously discussed. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is also respectfully requested.

Claims 10, 51, 53 and 54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Albinger, Jr. (U.S. 3,043,947). According to the Examiner, as broadly claimed, a majority of the deformities at different locations across the width and length on the panel surface of Albinger, Jr. have at least one light extracting surface that is angled at different orientations relative to the input edge depending on the location of the deformities on the panel surface to face the

portion of the input edge to which the light source is optically coupled. However, the basis for this rejection is not understood, since all of the deformities of Albinger, Jr. are semi-spherical depressions and thus do not have at least one light extracting surface that is angled at different orientations relative to the input edge depending on the location of the deformities on the panel surface to face the portion of the input edge to which the light source is optically coupled as recited in claim 51. Accordingly, claim 51 is submitted as clearly allowable.

Claims 10, 53 and 54 depend from claim 51 and are submitted as allowable for substantially the same reasons. Moreover, claim 10 further patentably distinguishes over Albinger, Jr. by reciting that the majority of the deformities are arranged in radial rows in a radial pattern across the width and length of the panel surface with the light extracting surfaces of the deformities in each radial row in radial alignment with the portion of the input edge to which the light source is optically coupled. In Albinger, Jr., the semi-spherical depressions 10 are arranged in radial rows in a circular pattern about the center opening 4, not in radial rows in a radial pattern across the width and length of the panel surface with the light extracting surfaces of the deformities in each radial row in radial alignment with the portion of the input edge to which the light source is optically coupled.

Claims 16, 55 and 56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Albinger, Jr. in view of Pristash et al (U.S. 5,005,108). Admittedly Pristash et al teaches that a variety of light sources can be used to illuminate an edge lit panel including LEDs. However, merely substituting an

LED or a plurality of LEDs as taught by Pristash et al for the light source of Albinger, Jr. in no way meets the limitations of claims 16, 55 and 56 which recite in addition to a plurality of light sources optically coupled to different portions of the width of the input edge, at least one light extracting surface of different ones of the majority of the deformities at different locations across the width of the panel surface is angled at different orientations relative to the input edge to face different portions of the input edge to which the different light sources are optically coupled. Also claim 16 further patentably distinguishes over these references by reciting that the majority of the deformities are arranged in radial rows in a radial pattern across the width and length of the panel surface with the light extracting surface of the deformities in each radial row in radial alignment with different portions of the input edge to which the different light sources are optically coupled.

Claim 52 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Albinger, Jr. in view of Pristash et al. According to the Examiner, it would have been obvious to substitute an LED or LEDs as taught by Pristash et al for the light source of Albinger, Jr. in order to provide a more efficient longer lasting low voltage light source. However, claim 52 depends from claim 51 and is submitted as allowable for substantially the same reasons.

Claims 74-78 were not rejected on prior art and are also submitted as clearly allowable. These claims all depend from claim 51 and recite other novel features in the claimed combination. Claim 74 recites that substantially all of the deformities across the width and length of the panel member have at least the

one light extracting surface that is oriented to face the portion of the input edge to which the light source is optically coupled. Claims 75-78 additionally recite that the deformities have two or more intersecting surfaces that intersect the panel surface and intersect each other, and that at least one of the intersecting surfaces of the deformities comprises the light extracting surface of the deformities that is oriented to face the portion of the input edge to which the light source is optically coupled. Also claims 76-78 additionally recite that the intersection of the intersecting surfaces of the deformities forms a ridge.

For the foregoing reasons, this application is now believed to be in condition for final allowance of all of the pending claims 10, 16, 51-56 and 74-78, and early action to that end is earnestly solicited.

In the event that an extension of time is necessary, this should be considered a petition for such an extension. If required, fees are enclosed for the extension of time and/or for the presentation of new and/or amended claims. In the event any additional fees are due in connection with the filing of this reply, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to our Deposit Account No. 18-0988 (Attorney Docket GLOLP0108USF).

Respectfully submitted,

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